~~AIR POUCH~~ ~~SECRET~~ RESTRICTED

~~SECRET/XXXXX~~

DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SPACE

(Security Classification)

845h.00/2-553

PRIORITY

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

REVIEWED BY [illegible] DATE 7/16/82

FROM AMCONGEN, Lagos, Nigeria.

DESP. NO. 185 EA

TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON

MESSAGE CENTER

DATE February 5, 1953

1953 FEB 19 PM 3 13

RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE

TS AUTH.

ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐

DECLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASABLE ☒

RELEASE DENIED ☐

REF

For Dept. Use Only	ACTION	DEPT.
kp	NEA*	N. REP OLI E
	REC'D FEB 18	E. OTHER O AG COMM DMPA DPA FRB IN LAB MSA NSRB TAR

SUBJECT: Report on Economic Situation in Northern Nigeria.

note
123 Ross, Robert W.

Vice Consul Robert W. ROSS made a 2,115-mile trip by automobile around the Northern Region of Nigeria between January 4 and January 16, 1952 in the company of the Resident Representative for General Motors Corporation. While maximum results were not obtained from the tour because of the fact that the trip had to be made with a private individual in his automobile, the tour clearly demonstrated the necessity of such travel in Nigeria for reporting officers of the Consulate General. The offer to travel with the GMC Representative was accepted because funds were not then available to finance such a trip from the Consulate General's budget. Despite the short notice we were able to give the Nigerian Government, excellent cooperation and assistance were offered by administrative, agricultural and commercial officers of the Government during the tour.

The iniinerary of the trip was as follows: first day--to Ilorin via Abeokuta, Ibadan and Oyo; second day--to Bida via Jebba and Mokwa; third day--to Kano via Zungeru, Funtua and Malumfashi; fourth and fifth days--in Kano; sixth day--to Zaria via Paki; seventh day--to Jos; eighth, ninth and tenth days in Jos; eleventh day--to Bida via Bukuru, Jemma and Abuja; twelfth day--Bida to Ibadan via Mokwa, Ilorin and Oyo; thirteenth day in Ibadan, leaving for Lagos via Abeokuta on the evening of that day. Through the courtesy of the Lagos Manager of the United Africa Company's Motor Department, the reporting officer stayed in UAC Rest Houses at Ilorin, Bida, Kano, Zaria and Ibadan.

Only casual observations were possible en route to Kano, as the stops were only overnight with early departures each morning. The close schedule did not permit stops along the way for survey purposes. While in Kano the reporting officer visited the Resident of Kano Province, the District Officer (Kano), head of the local Marketing and Exports Department, the Kano Agricultural Officer, the Manager of Patterson-Zachonis (a large Greek commercial concern), the district manager of the United Africa Company, the manager of John Holt's tannery and the director and staff of the Kano Sudan Interior Mission Eye Hospital (predominantly American-staffed).

Here, as in

RESTRICTED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET/XXXXX~~

RWRoss:hgz

REPORTER

ACTION COPY — DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The action office must return this permanent record copy to DC/R files with an endorsement of action taken.

FILED

845H.00/2-553

LWC

DC/R Central Files

Restricted
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~

DECLASSIFIED

Here, as in Jos and Ibadan, the reporting officer found that two or three additional days in the area would have been most valuable, particularly in allowing trips out to nearby features of interest and giving opportunity to speak to Nigerian political and commercial leaders.

SUMMARY

Several points were brought out by the tour. They are fully discussed below, but may be briefly stated as follows:

1. The post-World War II boom in the North of Nigeria tapered off during 1951 and is expected to settle down at a lower level than any post-war year in the near future. Commercial activity has slowed down in all fields, although high prices are still being received for Northern export crops (peanuts, cotton).

2. Those connected with the tin and columbite mines on the Jos Plateau are enjoying a high level of prosperity at present. There is, however, no significant increase in mining activities.

3. Both miners and government officials feel that the columbite bonus being paid in the USA was unnecessary so far as production in the area is concerned, and will bring no increase in Nigerian columbite production.

4. The Nigerian Government's reclamation program has not generally been successful in the Plateau area in making additional good farming land available to the indigenous farmers.

5. It is expected that the supply of Sokoto Red goatskins from Nigeria will begin to fall short of the US-UK demand by the end of this year. This is the result of the government's breed improvement program.

6. Only moderate success has been achieved by the Western Region in its program to halt the advance of black pad, swollen shoot and capsid bugs in the Western cocoa areas. It is, however, hoped that new spraying programs will bring improvement in the future.

Kano has long been one of the important trading centers serving both the African desert and the West African coast; and this function has not decreased to date. Any and every day may be seen long camel caravans arriving

Restricted
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~
Restricted

caravans arriving in Kano laden with products, meagre they may be in some cases, of French West Africa, to b up again with Nigerian goods or foreign products for d in the desert. But Kano has not remained a city of th and donkey trains. It is now a thriving center for mo transport in the Dahomey, French Niger, Lake Tchad and northern Nigerian areas. The prosperity of Kano, and immediate vicinity, has been aided immeasurably since II by the booming transit trade to the French territori this has now slumped. One commercial manager gave the glib explanation that the transit trade had dropped off of the cessation of ECA assistance to French West Afric the reporting officer cannot accept this explanation. conversations with both government and commercial people appears quite clear that the transit trade to French ter has fallen off for the same reason that business in Nort Nigeria has slackened--the huge, new post-war demand has met for the first time. Every person in Kano questioned matter of the current slow selling in the North replied t it was due to the fact that the effective demand of the a had reached a plateau which would be held as normal for s years. The boom in the prices of peanuts, cotton and hid skins brought unusual amounts of money into the hands of farmers of both Northern Nigeria and of the French areas with a corresponding heightening of effective demand for i goods. Prices are still good, but the not-too-impressive ards of requirements of the local people are met and it is expected that sales and commercial activity in the region continue now at a stable, relatively lower point. This slackening of demand in the French area, naturally, brought diminution in the transit trade of Kano.

Only very few of the merchants of Northern Nigeria for the trading slump which has occurred during 1951 and most of were caught with great quantities of "luxury" items on their shelves. Sales of such goods as bicycles, corrugated iron roofing and the better classes of textiles fell off badly du 1951, contrary to the expectations of most of the commercial people. It can now be assumed that the demand for these goo will remain at a level commensurate with the fact that most o the backlog of people who wanted those goods and did not have them have now bought. Automobile dealers expect that the sal of trucks and cars will be largely restricted to replacement sales only during the next year or two. There are now enough trucks in operation in the North to take care of the normal level of transport demand.

Several officials

DECLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~

DECLASSIFIED

Several officials in Lagos had stated that it was very obvious that this year's peanut crop would be even larger than last year's record crop because of the very high sales to date as compared with the same date during last year's buying season However, officers of the Marketing and Exports Department in Ka informed the reporting officer that the high purchases were due ~~the ready availability~~ of trucks for the transportation of the nuts to the buhing stations--the first time there has ever been enough transport to meet the immediate needs. In fact, they expect that slightly less peanuts may be bought and exported by the Marketing Board this season. The Nigerian Railway was able to step up its weekly evacuation of peanuts to the coast immediately prior to the opening of this season and had gotten all but approximately 67 thousand long tons of last year's crop out-of the North before the new crop came in.

This year, as almost every year since World War II, the flat expanse of land around the old walls of Kano is dominated by dozens of hugh pyramids of peanuts. The Marketing Boards and their private buying agents have now evolved a system of uniform pyramids, comprising about 800 tons of nuts, which permit the use of a standard size rubber sheet tent for fumigation purposes. This has cut the expenses of fumigation and also made it possible to do the work faster. The gas fumigation against the pests which are apt to infest the pyramids has been most effective and no losses from these pests are anticipated in the future. Thus the storage of this year 's nuts until they can be hauled to the coast is not of great concern to the Boards. The only bad factor remaining is the increase of free fatty acid in the nuts as they remain stored prior to final processing abroad.

The Marketing Board has also lent financial and technical support to two plants in Kano for the extraction of peanut oil for local consumption. The bulk of such oil has been imported from the UK in the past and the Kano processors hope to substitu te their locally produced, less expensive oil. Such sales hav have been in bulk, but Mr. CALIL is now beginning to make one quart, two quart and five gallon cans in which to market his oil. This producer also has his chemist experimenting with a flour made of the nut residue from the mill. It is their intention to sell the flour for mixing with cereal flours in bread making It is not expected that this will become an important product of the mill as little bread is used in the North.

Relatively little cotton is grown close to Kano, but the Marketing Board involved has its headquarters in that city. Observation of the cotton fields along the road between Bernin, Bwari and Malumfashi would seem to indicate that the crop is

spotty, depending

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~
Restricted

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~

spotty, depending upon the date the farmer plated his crop and how diligent he was in the use of fertilizer. Actually, none of it looked anywhere near as good as that grown in the USA. The reporting officer was informed that this year's crop would be considerably less than that of last season due to general late planting and the prevalence of very dry mornings toward the end of the rainy season. It is expected that both the buying season and the ginning will end early this year due to the ready availability of trucks and the improvement of the roads since last season.

The Marketing Boards for peanuts and cotton have held the prices to the farmer at almost the same level as last year despite a drop in the international prices being paid. The Boards are still making a substantial profit on the buying and selling of these crops and most officials feel that prices will be maintained very close to this year's for the next season.

The Kano district agricultural officer in charge mentioned the projects by his department to develop mixed farming in the North, in answer to a query by the reporting officer. The agricultural officer dismissed the encouragement of mixed farming very briefly, saying that it was not, to date, a success. The Northerners have not taken to the idea of genuine mixed farming and he expects that many more years of efforts will be necessary to achieve satisfactory results. Questioned about the somewhat optimistic reports released on the Northern mixed farming experiments and projects, he replied that the statistics on increase of mixed farms were based upon acceptance as mixed farms, many which should not be classed as such. Many farms counted in this way actually only grow two crops and, in his estimation, are not mixed farms.

Non-Nigerians on the Plateau, around Jos, are presently doing business in an atmosphere of great prosperity. The major sources of income for the residents of the plateau are the tin and columbite mines whose dump heaps dot the horizon in the vicinity of Jos. With the very high prices being paid for columbite and the very profitable trade in tin, the miners, the commercial houses and those natives who work for the miners are all doing well. The largest tin mining concern on the plateau is Amalgamated Tin Mines of Nigeria, Ltd. (ATMN), which produces more ores than all of the other operators together. Officials of this concern informed the reporting officer that their present profit per long ton of tinore is £300, and that they would consider it worthwhile to mine so long as the per ton profit did not drop below £100. One of the more successful independents

informed this

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~
DECLASSIFIED

Restricted ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ CLASSIFIED
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~

informed this officer that his two-man company made a profit of £180 per ton. It should be mentioned that his operations are presently carried out entirely by hand, excepting for the trucking of the ores, and that he hopes to cut down his expenses by the use of magnetic separators which are being shipped to him. He and most of the other small miners have been sending their ores to ATMN for separation.

It was somewhat surprising to the reporting officer to be told by a government land officer and officials of two mining companies that the 100% bonus now being paid Nigerian producers for their columbite was a waste of money. All of these men stated that the price alone was most satisfactory and that they would mine just as much columbite if the bonus was not being paid. They stated that they thought Nigeria should have been excepted from the bonus payments. There was also a great deal of confusion among miners, including the manager of ATMN, as to the terms of eligibility, the amount, the beginning date for payments and exact recipients of the extra premiums on columbite. Clarification has been requested by the Consulate General in order that the information may be transmitted to interested parties in Nigeria.

The Nigerian Government has instituted a mines reclamation program including the requirement that miners fill in the pits in the plateau left by their mining operations. This was particularly important in the case of the large operators, whose mechanized operations have left deep slashes in the surface of the plateau and huge piles of earth covering, in the aggregate, much farm land. Unfortunately, this requirement was not instituted until very recently and much land has already been lost. Trees seem to grow well on the reclaimed land, but even with liberal applications of compost the soil taken out of the mines will grow but very scant crops. These facts, plus the continuing opening of new workings, have aroused a great deal of animosity toward the miners from the local farmers, mostly of the Birom tribe. This feeling gives rise to incidents of attacks upon isolated houses of miners by Biroms, which attacks, fortunately, seldom lead to any serious injuries to the miners and their families. Greatest native resentment is, as might be expected, directed toward the staff of the ATMN because of their large scale ripping up of lands. The government's not-too-successful reclamation efforts are aimed at restoring farm land and avoiding the conflict wherever possible.

Root of the problem is the fact that the Biroms live at a bare subsistence level at all times and do not have enough land to spare from cultivation for mining. Topsoil on the plateau, in general, is only two to three inches deep and the Biroms can

CLASSIFIED ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~
Restricted

DECLASSIFIED
Restricted
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~

Biroms can raise only the poorest types of cereal, such as acha, which are not much more than grasses. Most of their cereals are, in fact, consumed in the form of beer--with meat being obtained by eating almost any creature which runs or walks on the plateau. Under these circumstances it behooves the government to attempt any and all programs which might either increase food production from the land being used or bring more land into use. It should be noted that the Biroms have not responded to schemes to resettle them on more fertile land at the foot of the plateau, preferring to continue their unclothed and unencumbered life on the plateau.

ATMN uses highly mechanized methods of extraction and separation for the tin and columbite and allied minerals found with them. With the assistance of thirty American Euclid earth-movers and five Bucyrus-Monagan walking draglines, the overburden is stripped off to expose the ore-bearing soil lying on top of bedrock, at depths of from twenty to sixty feet below the surface. The ore-bearing soil is then pumped out of the diggings via a mud-pump and run over a series of riffles to wash away the bulk of the soil. Both hydraulic nozzles and small headpans carried by natives are used to carry the ore-bearing soils into the mud pump basins. Company officials are well satisfied with the performance of the American earth-moving equipment and feel it is the best available to them. It was also interesting to note that the magnetic separators in ATMN's plant were American-designed and made in Canada under license.

While in Jos the reporting officer paid a visit to the Veterinary Department's establishment at Vom, about twenty miles south of Jos. The Principal Hides Improvement Officer informed the consular officer that the cattle census of Nigeria had been completed and that it had disclosed the fact that there are now five and one-half to six million head of cattle in Nigeria. Of the approximately seven million goats accounted for in Nigeria, six million are found in the North. He added that the goat census is felt to be inaccurate due to the owners' tendency to underestimate the number of goats held, especially in the south, in fear of being taxed more heavily. There are also six million sheep in the North, with the census not complete in the south.

The veterinary department officer also stated that he expected the 1953 export value of hides and skins to drop about three million pounds, from nine million in 1952 to six

million in

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~
X DECLASSIFIED Restricted

UNCLASSIFIED
~~Restricted~~
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~

million in value. This fact will result from both a diminution of the numbers of hides and skins shipped and a drop in the export prices. He warned that the US and UK demand for Sokoto Red goatskins would probably exceed the supply (for use as Moroccan leather) from late in 1953 onward for several years. He said that the Nigerian Government's policy would be responsible for this, although there was no scheme to boost prices involved. Over the last ten to fifteen years there has been a breakdown of the best blood lines in the Sokoto Red goats by indiscriminate breeding practices, and Government wishes to restore the top quality of the skins from this breed of animals. This is to be done by refusing to license the export of skins which are not up to high standards, which will result in decreased shipments for several years. On the other hand, the Veterinary Department is attempting to improve the quality and quantity of exportable cowhides from the abatoirs in Ibadan and Lagos. These two killing centers are the largest in Nigeria, yet the quality of their hides has been notably bad. There are two reasons for the poor quality: The high humidity and attendant difficulty of curing, and the poor methods of skinning employed. Primary cause of the sloppy skinning is the fact that the natives employed in the abatoirs receive very low wages--to supplement their pay they skin off huge chuncks of meat with the hide, which they later quickly and awkwardly tear off, carry out in the evening and sell to the poorer meat-buying public. The Veterinary Department has men in the abatoirs and hide-curing establishments teaching improved, especially adapted curing methods. This will aid in obtaining better hides, but the problem of poor southern hides will not end until properly trained and paid people do the skinning.

The Agricultural Officer in charge of the Plateau Province informed the reporting officer that there was little promise of improving the agricultural production of the area in the near future because of the generally poor soil and complete disinterest among the pagan tribes living there. Both the resettlement schemes at Shendam, at the foot of the plateau, and at Jemaa, nearer to Jos, have had to be changed from Birom settlements to locations for non-indigenous tribes. At least at this time, the indigenous people of the plateau seem to prefer to continue to live in their small, single family villages, scratching out subsistence crops rather than moving into new, larger agricultural settlements on better land. For these reasons it has been found more practical to people the resettlement villages with non-indigenous groups who are more

recent immigrants

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~
X UNCLASSIFIED ~~Restricted~~

UNCLASSIFIED
Restricted
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~

recent immigrants to the plateau. Some small success has been met in the area immediately adjacent to Jos in the program to encourage the Birom farmers to apply dried night soil to their small plots of land. They are beginning to appreciate the value, as well, of spreading the garbage and other residue from their villages on the crops. Agricultural Department attempts to grow certain types of small maize on the plateau have not been encouraging.

Included in the Plateau Province is a section of land north of Wamba which is not plateau area. This land lies at the foot of the escarpment and has a great deal more water and better soil than the plateau area. In this section the agricultural officers found considerable numbers of palms and have decided to attempt the establishment of small oil palm plantations near the escarpment. Palm seedlings have been ordered from the nursery in Ibadan and delivery of about two hundred trees completed. These plantations will be village-run under government supervision rather than being private establishments. The agricultural officer in Riom stated that they were very hopeful that the palm project would pay dividends. The people living in this general area live much better than their plateau neighbors, as the soil is relatively good and the hunting rewarding. Maise, cassava, coco yams and small quantities of cotton are the main crops of the district. There are also a few peanuts grown.

On the return trip to Lagos a one-day stopover was made in Ibadan to survey some problems of Western Region Agriculture. Due to the limited time available to the reporting officer in Ibadan it was felt that the period should be spent with only the officials in the Cocoa Division of the Department of Agriculture (Western Region). Cocoa is, by far, the Region's most important export crop and receives the major emphasis of the Department's work. The Deputy Director in charge of the Cocoa Division stated that they were now concerned with the problems presented by three kinds of cocoa killers: Swollen shoot disease, black pod and capsid bugs.

No effective preventative control has been found to replace the so-called "cordon sanitaire" system which has been in effect for over a year. This system has been satisfactory in curbing the further expansion of the diseased cocoa area, but assumes that the cocoa within the cordon will eventually be allowed to die. In Ibadan Province alone almost half of the province is now included in the area of mass infection, wherein control measures have

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~
UNCLASSIFIED
Restricted

DECLASSIFIED
Restricted
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~

on the rust control problem. ECA assistance has been given Nigeria in the production of improved strains of maize and it is hoped to make it an important food crop in the Region. For this reason the rust problem needs to be solved before large-scale planting is carried out.

A collection of photos taken during the twelve-day trip are enclosed as of possible interest and usefulness to the Department.

Erwin P. Keeler
American Consul General

Enclosure:

Collection of 15 photos
with negatives.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~
Restricted
DECLASSIFIED